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MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENANT
ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

ELEVENTH MEETING

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 12 September 1990, at 10:30 a.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. MARTENSON
(Under-Secretary-General for
Human Rights)

Chairman: Mr. BUDAI (Hungary)

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Closure of the meeting

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

1. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General, said that recent dramatic events in the Middle East should not overshadow the progress made in the field of human rights due, not least, to an encouraging transformation in the relations between the great Powers, which had had a profound effect on every sphere of international life. A common interest in peace, the advancement of human dignity and social progress had come to the fore, and a shared commitment to human rights had become increasingly evident in the new climate. The solutions to the major problems facing mankind had to rest upon a solid foundation of respect for human rights, which entailed respect by each State of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of each and every person.

2. In 1989 the General Assembly had adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which had entered into force on 2 September 1990, following the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession. Thirty-four States were parties to the Convention, and 105 were signatories. A committee on the rights of the child, to be composed of independent experts, would be established early in 1991. The General Assembly had also adopted the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. To date, it had been signed by 19 States and ratified by three; it would enter into force as soon as 10 instruments of ratification had been deposited. In July 1990, the Working Group of the Third Committee of the General Assembly had approved, in second reading, the draft International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, which would come before the Assembly at the next session.

3. While the legislative infrastructure at the disposal of the international community was most comprehensive, specialized bodies had had to be established to monitor compliance with the relevant instruments so as to guarantee universal enjoyment of human rights. The Human Rights Committee had done extraordinary work in that connection. At the same time, strong national infrastructures for the protection and promotion of human rights constituted a major safeguard against violations, and therefore the efforts of the Center for Human Rights were increasingly being focused on building up or strengthening national institutions by providing expert advice, training, fellowship programmes and various other forms of practical assistance in the sphere of human rights.

4. On 10 December 1988, in commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the General Assembly had launched the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights, the objectives of which were, firstly, to build up a universal culture of human rights, one that clearly recognized that human rights and fundamental freedoms were inherent to the human person as such, without any distinction, and secondly, to intensify co-operation with Governments, mass media, academic and research institutions and non-governmental organizations.

READEX FICHE

(The Temporary Chairman)

The latter bodies had a central role to play in that endeavour, as their attachment and input to the human rights programme were an example of the growing international participation in human rights issues. Moreover, non-governmental organizations represented a new dimension of international diplomacy.

5. Since the Tenth Meeting of the States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, held in 1988, the total number of States parties to the Covenant had reached 92, with the addition of Algeria, Burundi, Ireland, the Republic of Korea and Somalia. A further seven States - Algeria, Hungary, Ireland, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Somalia, had acceded to or ratified the Optional Protocol to the Covenant, bringing the total number of States parties to that instrument to 50. Nevertheless, if the legal norms embodied in the Covenant were to become universally applicable, many more accessions would be needed. For that reason the General Assembly had continued to call upon States that were not yet parties to the International Human Rights Covenants to take appropriate action.

6. The Human Rights Committee had continued to pursue its activities over the past two years in an exemplary manner, despite the fact that its workload, in relation both to the reporting process and to the communications procedure under the Optional Protocol, had increased substantially. In that regard, the continuing expansion and deepening of the process of dialogue between the Committee and the States parties deserved special recognition.

7. The procedures for the consideration of periodic reports had served to strengthen the prospects for the continuation of a fruitful collaboration between the Committee and the States parties. The latter had clearly demonstrated the importance they attached to such collaboration with the Committee by the care with which they were preparing their reports, by the high level of competence of the representatives they had been sending to participate in the consideration of those reports, and by the growing number of instances where States parties had responded to the recommendations or suggestions of the Committee by changing certain domestic laws or practices.

8. To date, the Committee had considered a total of 84 initial and 13 supplementary reports as well as 41 second periodic reports and four third periodic reports. Over the past two years, the Committee had received 211 complaints and had adopted 72 final views. Another of the Committee's notable accomplishments had been the elaboration and adoption of three general comments, bringing their total to 19. The latest comments had dealt with such important issues as non-discrimination, the protection of the family and the civil and political rights of children.

9. The Human Rights Committee had also continued to give careful attention to the reporting problems, as demonstrated by its active participation in the preparations for the very important meeting of the chairpersons of the human rights treaty monitoring bodies which had been held in Geneva in October 1988 at which recommendations had been adopted concerning the harmonization and unification of reporting guidelines as well as the improvement of co-ordination and the reduction

(The Temporary Chairman)

of duplication. A reporting manual was in the final stages of preparation and was expected to be available for distribution within the next several months. The previous year, the Task Force on Computerization had formulated recommendations on the computerization of the work of the human rights treaty monitoring bodies. In that regard, the Economic and Social Council had recommended that the General Assembly should make appropriate provisions in the budget for the 1992-1993 biennium for the recurrent costs of operating the data base which, it was hoped, would be established in 1991.

10. The Center for Human Rights had continued to strengthen the advisory services and technical assistance programme, which included workshops, training courses, the building up of law libraries, the elaboration of legislation in keeping with international standards and the translation of human rights instruments into local languages. To the three principal elements of the human rights programme, namely implementation, information and education, the Center was adding "co-ordination", in particular within the United Nations system.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

11. Mr. Metso (Finland) nominated Mr. Budai (Hungary) for the office of Chairman.

12. Mr. Budai (Hungary) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

13. Mr. Budai (Hungary) took the Chair.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (CCPR/SP/33)

14. The agenda was adopted.

15. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to rules 2 and 3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Meeting (CCPR/SP/2 Rev.1) and said that the Secretary-General had yet to receive proper credentials from a number of States parties represented at the present meeting. He suggested that, in accordance with rule 3, the representatives of those States parties should be permitted provisionally to participate in the meeting, and at the same time urged them to see to it that their credentials were submitted to the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

16. It was so decided.

ELECTION OF OTHER OFFICERS

17. The CHAIRMAN said that under rule 4 of the Rules of Procedure, the Meeting must elect between one and four Vice-Chairmen from among the representatives of the States parties, and noted that at the previous meetings of the States parties, four Vice-Chairmen had been elected.

18. Mrs. FOSTIER (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, nominated Mr. Raven (United Kingdom) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

19. Mr. GIRON (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, nominated Mrs. Castro de Barish (Costa Rica) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

20. Mr. SENE (Senegal), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, nominated Mr. Galal (Egypt) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

21. Mr. Raven (United Kingdom), Mrs. Castro de Barish (Costa Rica) and Mr. Galal (Egypt) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

ELECTION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLES 28 TO 32 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, OF NINE MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE TO REPLACE THOSE WHOSE TERMS OF OFFICE ARE DUE TO EXPIRE ON 31 DECEMBER 1990

22. The CHAIRMAN said that document CCPR/SP/34 and its Addenda contained the list of the candidates nominated by the States parties and their biographical data. The Secretariat had been informed that the candidates proposed by the Central African Republic had been withdrawn. The names of the nine members whose terms were expiring on 31 December 1990 were listed in Annex I of the document while those of the other nine who would continue to serve in the Committee until 31 December 1992 were given in Annex II. Of the nine members of the Committee whose terms were expiring, two were from the African region, two from Asia, one from Latin America, one from Eastern European countries and three from the Group of Western European and Other States. There were altogether 15 candidates for the nine vacancies to be filled.

23. He drew attention to certain provisions contained in articles 28 to 32 of the Covenant.

24. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mrs. Fostier (Belgium) and Mr. Fiol (Chile) acted as tellers.

25. A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Number of ballot pages:	90
Invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	89
Abstentions:	0
Number of representatives voting:	89
Required majority:	45

Number of votes obtained:

Mr. Ando	82
Mr. Apaloo	30
Mr. Burchak	31
Miss Chanet	72
Mr. Cooray	49
Mr. Dimitrijevic	65
Mr. El-Shafei	67
Mrs. Gwanmessia	36
Mr. Herndl	63
Mr. Kedzia	28
Mr. Ndiaye	53
Mr. Prado Vallejo	69
Mr. Sadi	53
Mr. Troncoso Benjamín	20
Mr. Wennergren	63

26. Having obtained the required majority and the largest number of votes, Mr. Ando, Miss Chanet, Mr. Prado Vallejo, Mr. El-Shafei, Mr. Dimitrijevic, Mr. Herndl, Mr. Wennergren, Mr. Ndiaye and Mr. Sadi were elected members of the Human Rights Committee for a term of four years, from 1 January 1991 to 31 December 1994.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

27. The CHAIRMAN declared the Eleventh Meeting of the States parties to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights closed.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.